

HISTORIC RESOURCES SURVEY OF KEY WEST, MONROE COUNTY, FLORIDA

Prepared for:

City of Key West

Building Department
Historical and Architectural Review Commission
604 Simonton Street
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Between February and June 2004, URS Corp (URS) of Gaithersburg MD conducted a survey and survey update of pre-1954 historic architectural resources for the City of Key West, Monroe County, Florida. The Key West Historic Resources Survey was conducted for the City of Key West Building Department, recipient of a grant-in-aid from the Division of Historical Resources-Department of State. The survey was conducted within the boundaries of the National Register-listed and locally designated Key West Historic District, comprising an approximately 540-acre section of the City of Key West, county seat of Monroe County. The project purpose was to update information on previously surveyed resources in the historic district; to survey historic resources in the historic district not previously identified; and to provide recommendations for further preservation activity in Key West, including the development of revised boundaries for the Key West National Register Historic District.

The Key West Historic Resources Survey included a search of the Florida Master Site File (MSF) for information on previously recorded historic resources in the Key West Historic District; research on the history and architecture of the City of Key West; and the development of an historic context for Key West up to 1954. Fieldwork included updating information on 2,375 previously surveyed resources and the survey of 83 additional pre-1954 historic resources within the boundaries of the locally designated Key West Historic District. The previously surveyed architectural resources were re-evaluated for their status as contributing resources in the Key West Historic District. The newly surveyed architectural resources were evaluated for their status as contributing resources in the currently defined Key West National Register Historic District, or as part of a proposed expanded Key West National Register Historic District. Information on the updated and newly surveyed resources was entered into the *SmartForm* data base program required by the Division of Historical Resources. Survey products to the Division of Historical Resources and the City of Key West included printed *SmartForms* for the surveyed resources, black-and-white and digital photographs, and location maps for all surveyed resources, as well as this Final Report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Currently, the Key West National Register Historic District is smaller than the locally designated Key West Historic District. URS surveyed 77 resources located outside the National Register district boundaries, but within the boundaries of the local historic district. The boundaries of the National Register district should be enlarged to include these surveyed resources as contributing resources.
- The City of Key West should integrate the FMSF forms and photocopied photographs of the Key West Historic District Survey with the files of previously surveyed historic resources at the Key West Building Department where they should be made available for review and copying by the general public.
- Based on 1962 Sanborn maps in the possession of the City of Key West and tax assessor's records, the City of Key West should identify areas outside of the locally designated Key West Historic District boundaries containing concentrations of pre-1954 resources eligible for survey and designation as part of a new and/or expanded local historic district in Key West.
- The City of Key West should seek funding for a comprehensive professional update of historic architectural resources in Key West every 5 years. Future surveys would reflect changes to the appearance of contributing resources in the district and allow for the

addition of buildings to the district that previously did not meet the 50-year criteria for inclusion.

- The City of Key West should seek funding to place architectural survey information, including digital photographs, on-line for use by the general public.
- The City of Key West Building Department staff should receive training on using the *SmartForm* program and be able to enter and/or change survey data for architectural resources in Key West.

1.	Introduction	1-1
1.1	Acknowledgements	1-1
2.	Methodology.....	2-1
2.1	Introduction.....	2-1
2.2	Project Purpose.....	2-1
2.3	Project Location and Boundaries.....	2-1
3.	Background Research.....	3-1
3.1	Research Design.....	3-1
3.1.1	Objectives	3-1
3.1.2	Methods	3-1
3.1.3	Expectations	3-2
3.1.4	Meetings	3-2
3.2	Environmental Background	3-2
3.3	Previous Cultural Resources Surveys in Key West.....	3-3
3.4	National Register-Listed Resources in Key West	3-4
4.	Historical Overview of the City of Key West	4-1
4.1	Introduction.....	4-1
4.2	Early Settlement Period (1513-1828)	4-1
4.3	Antebellum Key West (1829-1864).....	4-2
4.4	Post Civil War Boom Period (1865-1909).....	4-4
4.5	Hurricanes, the Great Depression, World War II and Post-War Key West (1909-1954)	4-6
5.	Survey Findings.....	5-1
5.1	Architectural Styles in Key West	5-1
	Gothic Revival Style	5-2
	Bahama (Conch) House	5-3
	Queen Anne Style	5-4
	Classical Revival, Double Gallery House	5-5
	Classical Revival Style: Key West Eyebrow House	5-5
	Classical Revival Style: Side Gable House	5-7
	Classical Revival Style: Side Gable House	5-8
	Masonry Vernacular	5-9
	Frame Vernacular–Single Gallery	5-10
	Commercial Vernacular	5-11

Table Of Contents

6.	Evaluation	6-1
6.1	Introduction.....	6-1
6.2	Benefits of the National Register.....	6-1
6.3	Historic Significance and the National Register Criteria.....	6-1
6.4	Applying the National Register Criteria to the Key West Historic District.....	6-2
6.5	Surveyed Resources Recommended as Contributing Resources in the Key West Historic District	6-3
7.	Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations	7-1
7.1	Summary and Conclusions	7-1
7.2	Recommendations.....	7-1

APPENDICES

Appendix A Previously Surveyed Historic Resources in the Key West Historic District (by MSF Number)

Appendix B Previously Surveyed Historic Resources in the Key West Historic District (by Street Address)

Appendix C Newly Surveyed Historic Resources in the Key West Historic District (by MSF Number)

Appendix D Newly Surveyed Historic Resources in the Key West Historic District (by Street Address)

FIGURES

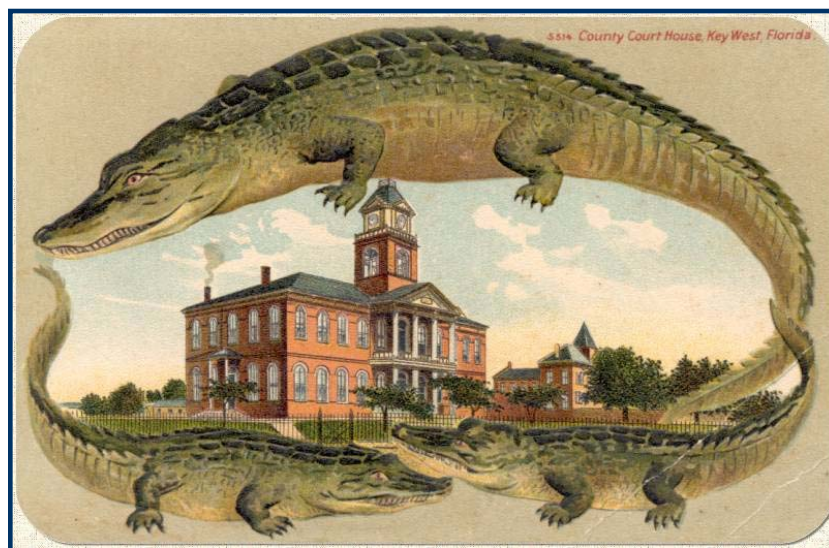
Figure 1	Site Location Map	2-3
Figure 2	Key West National Register Historic District Boundaries	2-4
Figure 3	Proposed Revised Key West National Register Historic District Boundaries	7-3

1.1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Key West Historic Resources Survey could not have been accomplished without the assistance, support, and cooperation of many people in Key West and Florida. Special thanks go to Dr. Diane Silvia, Key West Historic Preservation Planner, for initiating this project and Mayor Jimmy Weekley and Commissioners Tom Oosterhoudt, Merili McCoy, Ed Scales, Harry Bethel, Jose Menendez, and Carmen Turner of the City Key West for supporting the Key West Historic Resources Survey. The survey was also greatly aided by Ms. Gerzale Curry, Administrative Assistant for the Historic and Architectural Review Committee. Members of the Key West Historic and Architectural Review Commission, including George Born, Chairman, and members Matthew Stratton, Tim Root, Donald Craig, Marilyn Wild, and Christopher Langos provided advice and comments on the survey and this report. Staff from the Key West Library lent their expertise to the research phase. Staff from the Florida Department of State Division of Historical Resources, including Mary Rowley—Grants Administrator, and Vincent Birdsong—Florida Master Site File, provided valuable assistance during the survey fieldwork and data entry phases.

Unless otherwise noted, the historic photographs and postcard views in this report are reproduced courtesy of the Florida State Archives.

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Postcard View of Monroe County Courthouse, Key West, Florida

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The Key West Comprehensive Plan, the Key West Historic Preservation Ordinance, and Key West's status as a Certified Local Government (CLG) mandate that the City of Key West periodically conduct a survey of historic architectural resources within the city limits. In 2003, the City of Key West received a Historic Preservation Grant from the Florida Department of State-Division of Historical Resources to conduct the Key West Historic Resources Survey. This survey involves the systematic survey of architectural resources (including previously surveyed resources and pre-1954 architectural resources not previously surveyed) within the nationally and locally designated Key West Historic District in the City of Key West, county seat of Monroe County, Florida.

2.2 PROJECT PURPOSE

The project purpose is to provide current and accurate information on Key West's architectural resources for use by the Historic Architectural and Review Commission, the Key West Building Department, and the general public. The architectural survey is intended to provide current information on the contributing resources within the Key West Historic District and to provide recommendations for future preservation activity in Key West, including revision and/or expansion of the existing Key West Historic District boundaries. In January 2004, the City of Key West selected URS Corporation, Inc. (URS) of Gaithersburg, Maryland to conduct the Key West Historic Resources Survey.

The Key West Historic Resources Survey involved the review of previous architectural surveys in Key West, background research on the historical development of Key West, fieldwork to document pre-1954 architectural resources within the historic district (previously surveyed and newly surveyed architectural resources), entry of survey data into the *SmartForm* database, and preparation of a final report which summarizes the survey findings and provides recommendations for future preservation activity in Key West.

2.3 PROJECT LOCATION AND BOUNDARIES

The Key West Historic Resources Survey was conducted within the corporate limits of the City of Key West, county seat of Monroe County, Florida (Figure 1). The city occupies the entire island of Key West, the southernmost inhabited island of the archipelago known collectively as the Florida Keys at the southern end of the state. The Key West Historic Resources Survey was conducted within the Key West Historic District, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) (Figure 2). Additional survey was conducted outside of the boundaries of the National Register historic district, but within the slightly larger locally designated Key West Historic District to locate resources that could be included in a revised National Register historic district boundary.

Key West is an urban area consisting of historic residential, commercial, governmental, religious, transportation, maritime, and transportation-related buildings and structures. The Key West Historic Resources Survey project area excludes areas within the local Key West Historic District that are under Federal or state control, including the Key West Naval Air Station (NAS), the Key West US

Coast Guard Station, and Fort Zachary Taylor (a state park). The Key West Cemetery, an historic cemetery located in the heart of the historic district, was comprehensively surveyed in 1999-2000 and was not re-surveyed as a part of this effort. The Key West Historic Resources Survey did not include previously surveyed resources located outside of the boundaries of the local Key West Historic District.

Figure 1

Figure 2

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1.1 Objectives

The research objectives for this survey included 1) the identification of both previously surveyed architectural resources and pre-1954 architectural in the Key West Historic District not previously surveyed and their recording on Florida Master Site File (MSF) forms; 2) the identification of historic resources within the district currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places (individually and/or as part of the Key West Historic District), or as a locally designated landmark; and 3) the review of primary and secondary historical sources to develop an historic context for the Key West Historic Resources survey area up to 1954 to aid in the evaluation of the surveyed resources' historic significance.

3.1.2 Methods

Background research began with a review of previously surveyed historic resources in the Key West Historic District, based on a computer print-out obtained from the Division of Historical Resources-Bureau for Historic Preservation-Department of State. URS also conducted a search of the Florida Master Site File (FMSF) database for previously surveyed historic resources and previous cultural resources management reports for Key West. The Certified Local Government (City of Key West) provided URS with copies of MSF forms for previously recorded resources in Key West. The City also provided URS with the work products of the 1996-1998 Key West Survey, including *Historic Property Survey of the City of Key West, Florida* (1996). The locations, addresses, and resource conditions were then verified during the field portion of the architectural survey.

URS conducted research on the general history and development of Key West and the Florida Keys. This included research conducted on previously surveyed buildings and structures, published histories of Key West and Monroe County, the web site at www.keyshistory.org written by local historian Jerry Wilkinson, newspaper and magazine articles, historic postcards and photographs, National Register nominations for historic properties and districts in Key West, city directories, Sanborn Insurance Map Company maps, and other historic maps and atlases of Key West and the Florida Keys. Background research to develop the historic context was conducted at the Monroe County Library-Key West branch, the office of the Historic Florida Keys Foundation, the Monroe County Courthouse in Key West, the National Register in Washington, DC, and the Geography and Map Division of the Library of Congress in Washington, DC.

Field survey began with a review of pertinent information supplied by the local Certified Local Government; copies of the work products of previous architectural surveys in Key West; and the National Register nomination for the Key West Historic District. The URS survey team, consisting of two teams of two individuals each, used the MSF forms from previous surveys to locate and verify the condition of previously surveyed buildings. The City also supplied URS with a list of buildings within the Key West Historic District built before 1954 that had not been previously surveyed. The previously surveyed buildings, along with newly surveyed buildings, were photographed and the survey information was incorporated into the *SmartForm* database for this project. URS maintained photo logs used in the accurate labeling of the surveyed resources. Both black-and-white and digital photographs were produced as a part of this project.

3.1.3 Expectations

Based on a review of previous survey information, National Register nominations, and historic maps, it was expected that the Key West Historic Resources survey area would contain a significant concentration of historic resources from the 1828-1948 period. In addition, based on evidence of Key West's continued expansion during the post-World War II period, it is expected that some of Key West's historic resources may have been demolished. At the same time, there is the strong possibility of previously unrecorded 1948-1954 historic resources in Key West.

As a historically important residential, commercial, political, and transportation center in Monroe County, Key West contains a wide variety of property types:

Residential. The residential property type in Key West consists primarily of single-family homes, dating from the late 1820s to the 1950s; built with frame or masonry construction; and built in a variety of vernacular and nationally popular architectural styles. A much smaller number of historic duplex residences and multi-family (apartments, hotels, and motels) buildings exist in Key West. This type represents 74 % of the historic resources in Key West.

Commercial. The commercial property type in Key West consists of two- or more story, frame and masonry buildings dating from the late 1800s to the 1950s. The majority of these buildings are in the commercial vernacular style. Several historic residential buildings throughout Key West have been adapted for commercial use. This type represents 20% of the historic resources in Key West.

Religious. The religious property type in Key West consists of several Gothic Revival-style masonry buildings dating from the mid-nineteenth to early-twentieth centuries. This type represents less than 2% of the historic resources in Key West.

Transportation. The transportation property type is represented by the Key West Lighthouse and the former Key West Railroad Station, both now serving as museums. This type represents less than 1% of the historic resources in Key West.

Government The government property type is represented in Key West by the Monroe County Courthouse, the old City Hall, and the Customs/House Post Office. This type represents less than 1% of the historic resources in Key West.

Military The military property type is represented in Key West by the East and West Martello Towers, Fort Zachary Taylor, and the Key West Coast Guard and Naval Air Stations. This type represents less than 2% of the historic resources in Key West.

3.1.4 Meetings

Several meetings were held in connection with this project. A kick-off meeting with Dr. Diane Silvia, Historic Preservation Planner for the City of Key West, was held January 29, 2004 at the offices of the Historic and Architectural Review Commission (HARC) in Key West. The meeting covered the project background, schedule, purpose, and goals, and provided recommended research sources and local contacts. On May 25, URS Project Manager Geoffrey Henry attended a regularly scheduled meeting of the HARC at which time he gave an overview of the survey process, purpose, and survey findings.

3.2 ENVIRONMENTAL BACKGROUND

The Florida Keys are a string of islands that extend in a southwesterly direction from Biscayne Bay near Miami to the Dry Tortugas west of Key West. Key West is the most southerly of these islands

and is located 90 miles north of Cuba and 150 miles southwest of Miami. Key West, part of the lower Keys, is an elevated portion of the Miami Oolite Formation, an oolite limestone dating from the Pleistocene period. The topography is nearly uniformly flat. There are no natural deposits of building stone or much in the way of native hardwoods on Key West Island. The island formerly contained several tidal salt ponds historically important in Key West's salt-making industry, but these have since been filled in by development.

Physically, the island of Key West measures approximately three-and-one-half miles in length by one-mile in width. The island has a mean elevation of eight feet above sea level. A deepwater channel off the western shore of the island provides Key West with a good natural harbor.

Key West enjoys a mild sub-tropical climate and is frost-free. Precipitation occurs principally during the summer months. The island, surrounded by water, was at the whims of the weather for its fresh water supply until 1942 when a pipeline was constructed from mainland Florida to Key West. Although several major hurricanes have struck Key West during its history, storms are not normally a threat.

Until the construction of the Key West extension of the Florida East Coast (FEC) Railroad in 1912, Key West was physically cut off from the other keys and the rest of Florida. The 1935 hurricane destroyed this short-lived rail connection and today Key West is no longer accessible by rail. In 1938, the Overseas Highway (now part of US Route 1) was built on top of the FEC rail bed, restoring Key West's connection with the mainland. Today, US Route 1 remains the only highway route into Key West. The city is also served by regularly scheduled airline flights to and from the Key West International Airport and the US mainland.

3.3 PREVIOUS CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEYS IN KEY WEST

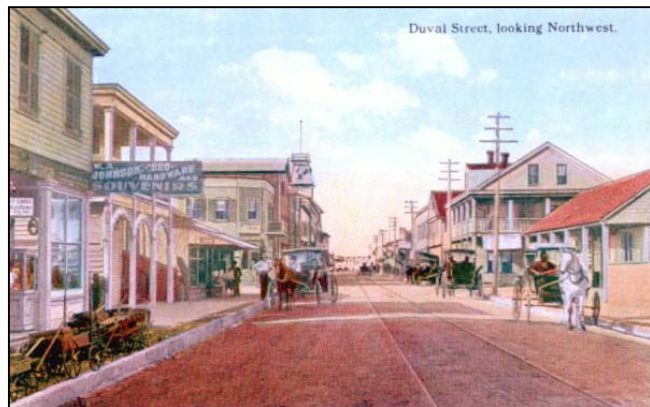
As part of the background research for this project, URS conducted a search of previous historic architectural surveys within the Key West Historic District. Historic preservation in Key West has been closely connected over the years with architectural surveys, resulting in the listing of both the Key West Historic District and numerous individual buildings in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

- In 1967, the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) surveyed eighteen significant Key West buildings, producing architectural drawings and photographs.
- In 1971, the Key West Historic District was listed in the NRHP.
- In 1974, Milo Smith & Associates surveyed 1,270 structures within Key West.
- In 1976, the Florida Division of Historical Records (then the Florida Division of Archives, History, & Records Management) contracted with the Historic Key West Preservation Board to complete a survey of historic, archeological, and architectural sites in Key West. The 1976 survey resulted in the completion of over 3,000 Florida Master Site File (FMSF) forms. The results of this survey were compiled in *Cultural Resource Survey of Key West* (1976).
- In 1983, the boundaries of the Key West Historic District were expanded. The historic district presently comprises 190 city blocks.
- In 1984, the Key West Naval Air Station was listed as a separate National Register District with 24 historic buildings.

- In 1996-1998, the historic structures survey was updated by Research Atlantica, Inc. of Boca Raton for the City of Key West, funded by a grant from the Bureau of Historic Preservation-Florida Department of State. The survey results are compiled in *City of Key West Florida Historic Sites Survey* (1998).

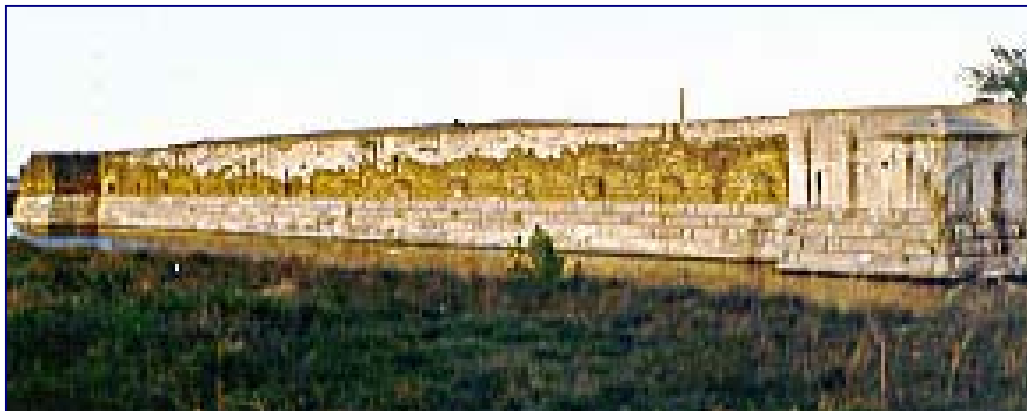
3.4 NATIONAL REGISTER-LISTED RESOURCES IN KEY WEST

Key West Historic District. The Key West Historic District, established in 1971 and expanded in 1983, contains the largest and most important concentration of historic wooden buildings in Florida. Key West's buildings are of architectural, commercial, religious, military, and industrial significance on the national level. Notable structures within the Key West Historic District are the Ernest Hemingway House, Audubon House, Little White House, Old Post Office and Customs House, and the Monroe County Courthouse. The historic color postcard view above shows Duval Street, located in the heart of the Key West Historic District



Key West Armory, 600 White Street. This Frame Vernacular building with Italianate details (shown at left in an undated photograph) was designed ca. 1900 by architect T.F. Russell and was built to house men and arms of the Island City National Guard.

Fort Zachary Taylor, US Naval Station. Fort Zachary Taylor (below) was built at the time of the Mexican War to defend Key West, then Florida's largest city. Designed to withstand a long siege, the Fort was controlled by Union forces throughout the Civil War. The Fort was not completed until 1866. Fort Zachary Taylor is also a National Historic Landmark. Photo source: Thefloridakeys.com.



Eduardo Gato House, 1209 Virginia Street. This 2-story frame Classical Revival-style house (shown at right in a ca. 1950 photo) has a prominent two-story front porch. The house was built in 1890 by Cuban immigrant Eduardo H. Gato, who founded the city's largest cigar factory. The residence later served as a school, and then a hospital. Currently it houses a bed-and-breakfast establishment.



Little White House (Quarters A), US Naval Station. This 1890s frame dwelling (shown at left in a postcard view) was originally the commandant's quarters on the Key West Naval base. President Harry S. Truman stayed here during his frequent working vacations in Key West during his term of office and less frequently thereafter until his death in 1971. The Little White House is also a National Historic Landmark.



Thompson Fish House, Cannery, and Turtle Kraal, 200 Margaret Street. Built in 1918 and added onto until 1944, this plain concrete block building is associated with the historically significant maritime industry in Key West. Thompson served as Key West's mayor and was active in the political and economic life of the city. Kraals were used to confine turtles after capture. The ca. 1948 photo at left shows employees of Thompson's company transferring turtles from a boat to the kraals.

Ernest Hemingway House, 907 Whitehead Street. This rare example of masonry residential architecture in Key West was built after the Civil War by Asa Tift, a prominent merchant. The house was made famous by writer Ernest Hemingway who purchased it in 1931 and resided in it for long periods throughout the rest of his life. Hemingway wrote much of his best seller *To Have or Have Not* while living here. The Ernest Hemingway House is also a National Historic Landmark.

Photo source: Hemingwayhome.com





Old Post Office and Custom House, Front Street. This imposing Richardsonian Romanesque-style brick building, shown in an historic postcard view at left, was designed by Florida architect William Kerr in 1891 and features decorative terra cotta and brick work. The building functioned as a post office until 1932.

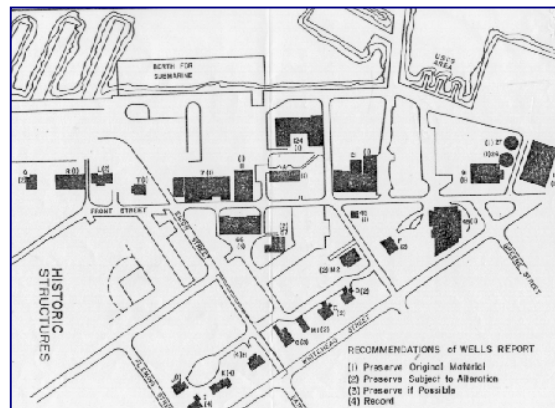
Dr. Joseph Porter House, 429 Caroline Street. Built in 1838, this was the birthplace of Dr. Joseph Porter, Key West's first native-born physician. Altered over the years by successive owners, the unusual house combines elements of Bahamian, New England, and French Second Empire architectural elements. The house is shown at right in a mid-20th-century photo.



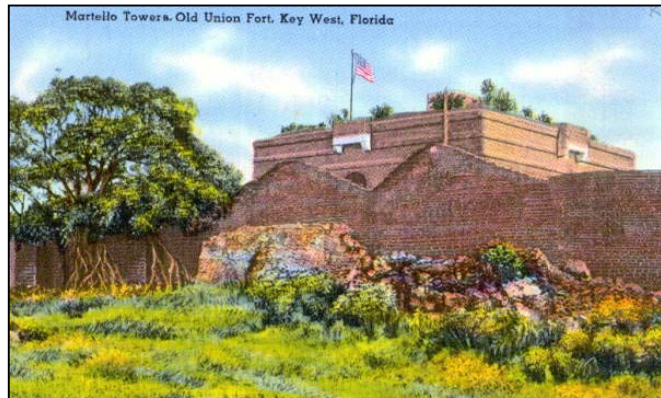
US Coast Guard Headquarters, Key West Station, NW corner of Front and Whitehead Street. This 1-story building designed by architect J.M. Scarpitt, dating from 1856-1861, was established as a Navy supply depot and served as the Naval Administration building until 1932. The Key West USCG Station is shown in a ca. 1980 aerial view below.



US Naval Station, west side of Key West, shown below on a ca. 1980 facilities map. This complex consists of 24 contributing structures erected between 1845 and 1942, as well as 4 freshwater cisterns and 4 elevated storage tanks. Known as the "Gibraltar of the Gulf," the Naval Station once commanded the entrance of the Gulf of Mexico from the Atlantic.



East Martello Tower, (Key West Art and History Museum). S. Roosevelt Boulevard. This fortified Martello tower, shown in an undated postcard view at right, was commissioned in 1862 and was incorporated with Ft. Zachary Taylor into the defense of the city. Unlike true Martello towers, which are circular, the central tower of East Martello is square.



West Martello Tower, between Reynolds and White Street. These remnants of the fortified Martello tower built between 1861 and 1866 were designed to support Ft. Zachary Taylor's defense of the city.

Photo Source: www.Floridakeyhistory.com

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This historical overview provides a context against which the significance of the historic architectural resources in the City of Key West can be evaluated, both individually and collectively. The historic context is based on research contained in published histories, National Register nominations, and previous architectural and historical studies of Key West and Monroe County. Historic maps and atlases of the area, individual building and property histories, and interviews with property owners and local historians have supplemented this information. The historical overview of Key West is organized according to the following time periods, corresponding to important dates in Key West's history:

4.2 EARLY SETTLEMENT PERIOD (1513-1828)

First discovered by Ponce de Leon in 1513, the Florida Keys were only thinly settled by Europeans for nearly 300 years thereafter, and were known mostly only to transient fishermen, pirates, loggers, and salvagers. Contacts between the Spanish and the native Indian residents of the islands were few and largely unrecorded. The Spanish explorers were mostly indifferent to exploring or settling the stony islands of the Florida Keys, which they mapped and named principally as aids to navigation.

The history of Key West and the rest of Florida during this period was linked with the European battle for dominance in the New World during the eighteenth century. Florida alternated between British and Spanish ownership after 1763, although sovereignty over Key West and the Florida Keys was often contested separately between Spain and Britain for many years. Like the Spanish, the English did little or nothing to encourage settlement on either Key West Island or the Keys, choosing instead to concentrate on their colony in the Bahamas. The salvaging of wrecked cargo vessels (known as wrecking) off the Florida Keys became a major industry for Bahamian ship captains during the eighteenth century.

In 1819, Spain ceded full sovereignty over Florida to the United States and in 1821, Florida became a US territory. Soon thereafter, settlers from New England and the South arrived on Key West Island. Among them was John Simonton, who believed that the island was “the only eligible situation for a depot of wrecked property on the whole coast of Florida (Dean 1998: 22).

In January 1822, Simonton purchased Key West Island from its Spanish owner. He in turn sold off portions to individual investors, with the construction of houses, stores, wharves, and warehouses soon following (Wilkinson 2003a:2). In March 1822, Secretary of the Navy Smith Thompson wrote President James Monroe that “there can be no doubt of the importance of the island (Key West) . . . It affords a very eligible depot for wrecked property which is highly necessary and advantageous where the navigation is attended with so many dangers and difficulties” (Dean 1998: 23). Thompson ordered Lt. (later Commodore) Matthew Perry to the island to make a survey. Later that year, Congress designated Key West as a naval station and depot. Monroe County was created on 3 July 1823 with Key West as its seat (Wilkinson 2003a: 3). The county then incorporated land presently part of at least nine different Florida counties, making Key West a highly inconvenient county seat for many of its residents.

The 1825 Federal Wrecking Act prescribed that all property wrecked in American waters be taken to a US Port of Entry (Shiver 1976: 23). Key West remained under military control while the US Navy

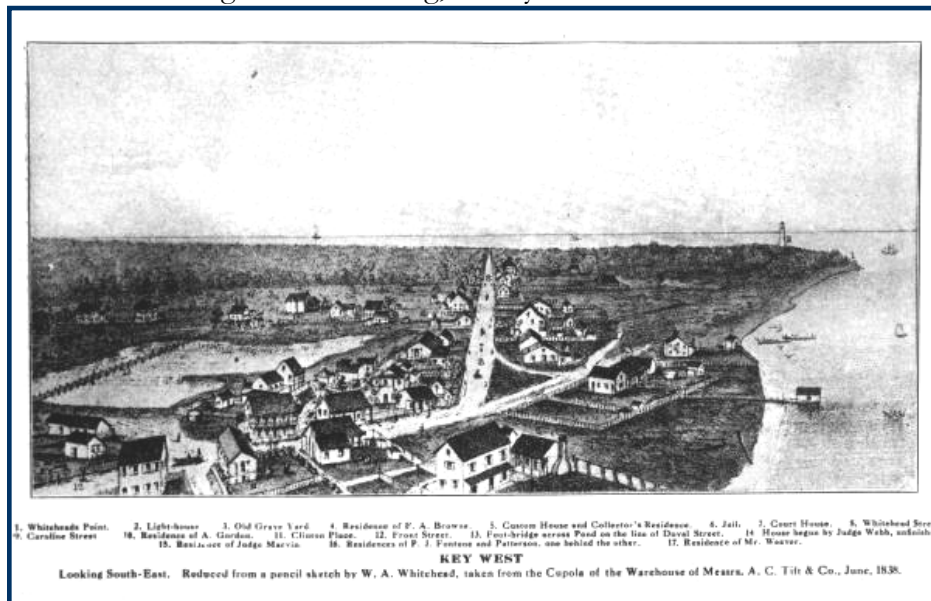
and its West Indian Anti-Piracy Squadron worked to rid the surrounding area of pirates. This was accomplished by 1826 and in 1828 the City of Key West was incorporated.

4.3 ANTEBELLUM KEY WEST

Key West grew quickly following its incorporation in 1828. In 1829, the 64-block city was mapped and platted and a year later its population had reached 517. Of this number, 386 residents were white, 83 were free blacks, and 66 were slaves (Wilkinson 2003: 3). Development in Key West, both commercial and residential, was concentrated along the existing wharf area.

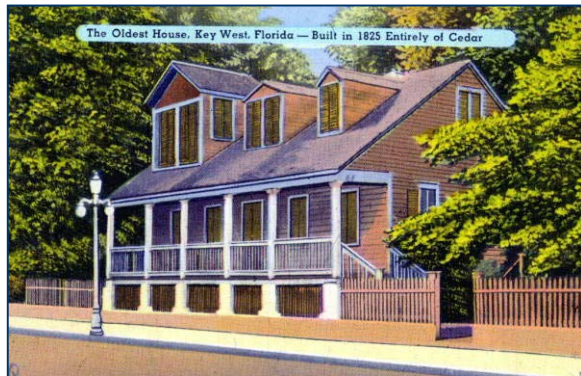
In 1828, Key West was made a Port of Entry, initiating the colorful period of wrecking in the city's economy. Key West and the Bahamas thrived as wrecking centers during the first half of the nineteenth century, with both benefiting from the lack of lighthouses or accurate navigational charts of the area. Eventually three lighthouses—at Key West, Sand Key, and Carysfort Reef—were built in the Florida Keys during the 1820s, but they initially had little effect on the number of maritime accidents (Dean 1998: 28) (Wright 1984:12). In 1826, Congress established an Admiralty Court at Key West at which salvage suits were settled and whose judge could license salvagers and their operations (Greer 1971: 10). Between 1830 and 1850, Key West's population rose to 2,645, due mostly to its importance as a deepwater port and a naval station and to the lucrative wrecking and salvage business carried on by its resident ship captains. By the 1830s some residents were engaging year-round in fishing and salt-making, and by the late 1830s the trade in locally caught sponges was

in its infancy. The abundant fishing attracted sailors from New England, some of whom remained to settle on the island. Turtling also developed as a viable enterprise for local fishermen.



1838 view of Key West,

The first distinguishing features of Key West's architecture can be seen in published views of Key West dating from 1838 (above). The local architecture is overwhelmingly framed, with few pretensions to style. Residences have side- or front-facing gable roofs, and some have incised porches. Few buildings remain from this period however, as most were destroyed either during the 1846 hurricane, the 1859 or 1886 fires, or the 1909 hurricane. By one estimate, nearly all of Key West's 600 houses standing in 1846 were partially damaged or destroyed by that year's hurricane. The 1858 fire destroyed numerous buildings along Greene, Front, and Whitehead Streets.

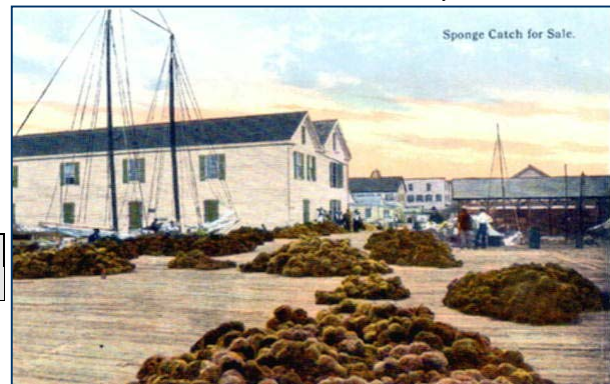


Key West's "oldest house" built in 1825 on Duval St.

The US military has had an overarching influence on Key West's economy from the city's earliest days. In 1831, an Army post was established at Key West. In 1845, the Federal government embarked upon the construction of two large forts, Fort Jefferson on the Dry Tortugas Islands, and Fort Zachary Taylor, located along Key West's south shore. Construction on both forts lasted until after

the Civil War, and the influx of masons and workers boosted Key West's economy during the 1840s and 1850s. By 1850, the city's population had reached 2,635. The two forts also introduced brick construction to Key West's building vocabulary (Shiver 1976: 27).

Almost from its beginning, Key West had a remarkably self-sufficient and highly developed maritime economy. Seafaring, whether it was fishing or wrecking, was the source of most Key Westers' livelihoods during the early 1800s. Salvage claims for wrecks throughout the Florida Keys were adjudicated in Key West, and the sheer volume of these claims "made admiralty a kind of local industry" (Zimny 1982: 8.4). The 1850s and 1860s also initiated the rise of the locally important sponging industry in Key West. This trade attracted a noticeable influx of Bahamian immigrants to Key West beginning in the 1850s, which continued into the 1890s.



Postcard view of sponge warehouses and drying

Key West was struck by a powerful hurricane in 1846 and an extensive fire in 1859, both of which did substantial damage to the city's residential and commercial buildings. Most of the destroyed buildings were rebuilt to almost exactly their original appearance, initiating a tradition that persists to this day. Somewhat remarkable was the overwhelming tendency to rebuild in wood, with almost no brick buildings constructed in the 1859 fire's aftermath.

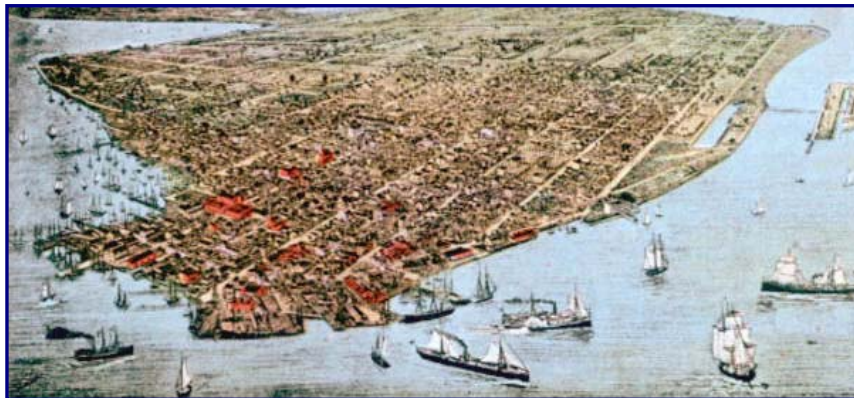


Ca. 1855 view of Key West and its

A slave state, Florida seceded from the Union on 11 January 1861. With its large naval presence and deepwater port, Key West was of vital importance to both sides. Fort Zachary Taylor and the city's defenses were seized by the Union forces just two days later. With a population of 2,862, Key West was by 1862 the second largest community in Florida as well as the state's wealthiest (Zimny 1982: 8.7). The city remained in Union hands throughout the war and served as the base for attacking Confederate blockade runners (Morrison 1974: 34). The city prospered during the Civil War, virtually the only Southern city to remain unscathed. The East and West Martello Towers built on the island's southern shore important physical reminders of the Civil War in Key West. The two ruined fortifications are listed individually in the National Register.

4.4 POST CIVIL WAR BOOM PERIOD (1865-1909)

By the late 1860s Key West had all the hallmarks of an urban center—churches, schools, factories, and governmental buildings—in a state with few such centers of population. The post-Civil War period coincides with an era of extensive development in the island's built environment. Several large and architecturally distinguished buildings were erected during the last half of the nineteenth century, including the Convent of St. Mary Immaculate, St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church, the Monroe County Courthouse, and a number of public schools. The densely packed city is depicted in an 1884 bird's eye view (below). Key West's shipping-related buildings were concentrated along the wharves, but otherwise integrated commercial and residential buildings in its cityscape.



1884 view of City of Key West,

The Cuban influence on Key West's history had begun in the 1860s as Cuba's dissatisfaction with Spanish colonial rule grew. The Cuban War for Independence, beginning in 1868, drove Cuba's lucrative cigar-making industry and its workers to Key West. Spanish became almost a second language in Key West during this period. Carlos Cespedes, a native Cuban, was elected Key West's Mayor in 1875.

Physical reminders of this facet of Key West's history are many, including the former cigar factories, the Cuban Club on Duval Street, the San Carlos Institute, the home of the city's leading manufacturer Eduardo Gato, and the distinctive small frame homes built in Key West by the cigar companies for its workers. The cigar industry declined after the 1890s, as manufacturers moved their operations to cities elsewhere in Florida, particularly Tampa which had a better transportation system. A large expatriate Cuban community remained in Key West, however. It is estimated that Cubans made up half of Key West's population in 1890.



Cuban Navy parading down Duval Street in ca. 1900 photograph (left). Cuban Club on Duval Street in a ca. 1910 photograph (right).

The 1886 fire was the most devastating of the fires that struck Key West in the nineteenth century. One of the most prominent casualties was the Ybor cigar factory, whose operations relocated to Tampa soon thereafter. As before, the fire's aftermath was marked by a quick reconstruction of the city's building stock, returning again to frame construction along mostly vernacular architectural lines.

The exceptions to this rule were several notable brick public buildings erected in Key West during this period, including the Monroe County Courthouse with its distinctive tower and belfry (1890), the Richardsonian Romanesque US Customs House (1891), and the Old City Hall (1891) on Greene Street. The National Bank Building on Front Street (right), a polychromatic brick building at the corner of Front and Duval Streets, is one of the most distinctive masonry commercial buildings from the post-1886 period in Key West.



First National Bank Building, Front and Duval

Cuba and its unsettled political affairs returned to the forefront of Key West's consciousness beginning in 1891, when the Cuban liberator Jose Marti arrived in Key West to organize the Cuban Revolution. American agitation of the Cuban situation culminated with the explosion of the Battleship *Maine* in Havana's harbor on February 15, 1898, sparking the Spanish-American War. The sinking of the *Maine* and its crew are commemorated in Key West by the *Maine* monument in the city's cemetery. The war was heavily covered by the American press, whose correspondents descended on Key West, many of them reporting on the city's colorful appearance and polyglot "un-American" population.



Battleship *Maine* Monument, Key West Cemetery

By the 1890s, there were emerging more distinct racial and ethnic distinctions in the city's neighborhoods. Key West's areas of black settlement developed outside the original city limits south of Angela Street, largely between Whitehead and Front Streets. Blacks in Key West were descended from native-born free blacks, freed slaves, and Bahamian immigrants. Many were active in the fishing, sponging, and turtling industries. Cuban employees of the city's cigar companies mostly lived in company-owned and/or built housing, some of which can still be seen along Angela Street.

4.5 HURRICANES, THE GREAT DEPRESSION, WORLD WAR II, AND POST-WAR KEY WEST (1909-1954)

By the early 1900s, Key West's more observant citizens could not help but notice that a shift in the city's fortunes was occurring. Several once dominant industries, such as sponging, wrecking, and cigar making, were on a steep decline or almost gone. One obvious impediment to Key West's economic growth was its location on an island. While the rest of the country was becoming more and more tied together by its rail network, Key West still relied on slow and undependable water transport. The city also still lacked a dependable source of drinking water for its inhabitants. Its isolation was further emphasized following the hurricanes of 1909 and 1910 when relief efforts from the mainland were largely thwarted due to lack of transportation.

View of Caroline Street in Key West following the 1909

The Spanish American War had focused the attention of influential Americans on Cuba and its economic possibilities, with Key West an integral part of these considerations. Prominent among these individuals was Henry M. Flagler, president and founder of the Florida East Coast (FEC) Railroad. Flagler had developed luxury resorts at St. Augustine and Palm Beach during the 1890s. Flagler's railroad reached Palm Beach in 1893 and Miami in 1896, thereby opening up South Florida for development of both its tourism and agricultural potential (Martin 1949: 78).



In late 1904, Flagler gave the go-ahead for construction of the last major business venture of his career: the construction of the Key West Extension of the FEC. This railroad line connecting Homestead with Key West 156 miles to the south would then connect Key West with freight and passenger ferries to and from Cuba, linking the untapped markets of the island with Key West and

the United States. Flagler also envisioned Key West's growth as a shipping hub for traffic going through the planned Panama Canal.



Arrival in Key West of Henry Flagler aboard his

Construction of the railroad line through the Florida Keys entailed almost unheard of expenditures of money by Flagler and human lives by his workforce. Hurricanes in 1909 and 1910 bedeviled construction of the railroad bridges between the keys. Derided as “Flagler’s Folly” during its construction, the popular opinion on the

“Train that Goes to the Sea” changed almost instantaneously to admiration as the “Eighth Wonder of the World” at its completion in 1912. Flagler himself triumphantly rode the first train into Key West (Zimny 193: 8.6)

The railroad brought superficial benefits to Key West in the form of regular shipments of fresh water and ice, as well as regular mail service. In actuality, the railroad had less of an economic impact on Key West than had been envisioned. Most passengers continued onto Cuba from the US mainland and visa versa, and the opening up of Cuba’s pineapple crops for export killed the Florida Key’s native pineapple industry. Without well-developed resort hotels of its own, Key West was not yet a preferred tourist destination like Palm Beach or Miami.

Ca. 1916 view of Key West, with the Monroe County

World War I re-emphasized Key West’s military importance. By then, it had earned the sobriquet “Rock of the Caribbean” and was the site of a seaplane base, a submarine basin, and military housing preceding the arrival of troops. The railroad yards and Trumbo docks were busy during this period, bringing new life to the City’s maritime economy.



Throughout Florida, the 1920s were a period marked by frenzied real estate speculation and development—the “Florida Land Boom.” The boom was driven partly by dependable rail and automobile transportation, which Key West only partly had, due to the lack of roads into the city. Thus, Key West participated only marginally in this aspect of Florida’s development. By 1925, Key West’s population had reached 13,118, soon to be outstripped by faster-growing cities in Florida.

SECTION FOUR

Historical Overview of the City of Key West

However, some movement was made towards development of Key West's tourist potential during the 1920s with the building of the Casa Marina Hotel by the FEC in 1921 and the La Concha Hotel in 1924. The La Concha Hotel on Duval Street (below) is still the tallest building in Key West. At the same time, Monroe County initiated a rudimentary road system in 1924 that eventually became the "Overseas Highway." Sports fishermen were drawn to Key West and the Florida Keys during the 1920s. Prohibition and the consequent rum-running operations in and around Key West gave the city a raffish reputation, attractive to artists and writers. The initiation of mail service between Key West and Havana by Pan American Airways in 1927 seemed to be a good sign for Key West's tourist economy.

Ca. 1929 Postcard View of La Concha Hotel



While Florida suffered the effects of the end of the Land Boom beginning in 1926, Key West's economic troubles truly began with the decline of the military's presence after 1932. That year, the Navy reduced its base to maintenance status. By then, the sponging and cigar industries had all but vanished. The Coast Guard also left Key West, as did many steamship lines that used to call at the City's port (Shiver 1976: 38). Faced with a declining tax base, little economic activity, and a yet untapped tourist potential, the City of Key West officially declared insolvency in 1934 and threw itself in the hands of the state. The 1935 Labor Day Hurricane destroyed the FEC's railroad bridges, forcing the railroad into bankruptcy and cutting off the city's vital rail link with the mainland.

Florida's government immediately turned to the Federal Emergency Relief Agency's director for Florida, Julius Stone (Zimny 1983: 8.7). Stone developed a visionary plan to fully develop Key West's tourist potential through a series of measures including reduced airfares to Key West, civic beautification, and the construction of hotels and other tourist attractions. Local citizens were put to work cleaning streets and beaches and constructing public works projects. The most notable of these projects was the Key West Aquarium (right), a roofless masonry building completed along Front Street in 1936. Stone's plan was a fateful one for Key West, whose effects are still felt today, as its residents wrestle with the problems of crowds, pollution, and high real estate prices.

Ca. 1940 postcard view of Key West's Aquarium



The construction of the Overseas Highway after 1935, which involved converting the former railroad bridges through the Florida Keys to vehicular use, stimulated economic activity in Key West. The Overseas Highway, opened in 1938, afforded Key West a reliable overland public transportation system, finally opening the island and the Florida Keys to sustained development.

SECTION FOUR

Historical Overview of the City of Key West

Preparations for World War II predictably brought new vigor to Key West's economy. The Naval Station was reopened and the Navy signed a lease in 1940 for conversion of Trumbo Point to a Naval Air Station. A Fleet Sonar School also opened. In all, 15,000 military personnel supported these operations during the war. One dramatic consequence of the Navy's return to Key West was



the construction in 1942 of a freshwater pipeline between the mainland and Key West. Key West's citizens were finally freed from their reliance on rainwater collected in metal or concrete cisterns. After the war, Key West gained new visibility nationally due to President Harry Truman's "working vacations" at the so-called Little White House at the Naval Air Station.

President Harry S. Truman waves to crowds in Key West in

Despite threats of downsizing by the Navy, Key West's post-war economic future looked bright. In 1950, the city's population reached 26,000 (Wilkinson 2003: 38). The harvesting of shrimp breathed new life into the region's fishing economy: in 1960 nearly 400 shrimp boats docked at Key West. Reflecting growth in the school-age population, Key West had eight public schools, including Key West High School, which opened in 1956. Car ferries and airline flights linked Key West with Havana until the Cuban Revolution in 1959. In 1963, the Navy housed nearly 10,000 personnel in Key West and still employed nearly 1,800 people.

Tourism in the post-war period was again on the upswing, aided by the construction of several new motels. By 1963 there were nearly 40 motels listed in the city's telephone directory, including the Blue Marlin Motel (below) on Simonton Street, the El Rancho Motel on Truman Avenue, and the Key Lodge Motel on Duval Street. Different from the older hotels or tourist houses of the 1920s, motels such as the Blue Marlin offered clean and simple accommodations to motoring visitors who were provided with on-site parking courts.

The Blue Marlin Motel, in a ca. 1958 postcard view.

The demolition of several notable buildings in Key West during the 1960s, including the St. Mary Immaculate Convent, brought the importance of historic preservation of Key West's architecture to the forefront.

Architectural surveys conducted during the 1970s and 1980s and historic preservation in Key West have been closely connected over the years, with these architectural surveys

resulting in the listing of both historic districts and individual buildings in the National Register of Historic Places. In 1971, the Key West Historic District was listed in the National Register. In 1976, the Florida Division of Historical Records contracted with the Historic Key West Preservation Board to complete a comprehensive survey of historic, archeological and architectural sites. In 1983, the boundaries of the Key West Historic District were expanded. The historic district presently comprises 190 city blocks..



5.1 ARCHITECTURAL STYLES IN KEY WEST

Most architecture in Key West defies architectural classification along traditional stylistic lines. Very seldom does one encounter a “pure” example of Queen Anne or Classical Revival Style architecture in Key West. The buildings in Key West range from prominent buildings designed by architects to much simplified, vernacular versions of these styles. Several architectural studies and the *Historic Architectural Guidelines* developed by the City of Key West have recognized the importance of Key West’s vernacular architecture. The following descriptions, accompanied by photographs of local examples, illustrate the isolated and few high-style examples of Key West’s architecture along with their many vernacular variants. The descriptions of many of Key West’s unique vernacular variants have been identified in *Historic Architectural Guidelines* (2000), published by the City of Key West.

Local builders in the 19th and 20th centuries often copied well-known national examples as depicted in illustrations or photographs. Often, they borrowed freely from builders’ and architects’ handbooks, scaling back the final design according to their own ability and/or the taste of the owner. In the 20th century, popular magazines and department store catalogues such as Sears & Roebuck’s provided the inspiration for a few residential styles in Key West such as the Bungalow and American Four Square styles. Many buildings in Key West, particularly those that have been added onto or remodeled at different periods, may exhibit elements from several styles. The melding of several historical styles in one building or complex of buildings is an important feature worthy of preservation in its own right.

American Foursquare: 1% (28)

Art Deco: <1% (3)

British Colonial: <1% (1)

Bungalow: 2% (55)

Classical Revival: 1% (29)

Colonial Revival: <1% (9)

Craftsman: <1% (1)

Frame Vernacular: 81% (1,984)

French Colonial: <1% (1)

Gothic Revival: <1% (13)

International: <1% (2)

Italian Renaissance Revival: <1% (2)

Italianate: <1% (3)

Masonry Vernacular: 6% (143)

Mediterranean Revival: <1% (29)

Minimal Traditional: <1% (5)

Mission: <1% (8)

Moderne: <1% (8)

Monterey: <1% (3)

Not Applicable: <1% (3)

Octagon: <1% (2)

Other: 3% (81)

Queen Anne (Revival): 2% (39)

Ranch: <1% (1)

Romanesque (Revival): <1% (2)

Second Empire: <1% (3)

Gothic Revival Style

During the nineteenth century, the Gothic Revival Style led the Romantic rebellion against the pristine and pure qualities of prevailing classical styles. The style was rarely used for residences, however and is rare in Key West, except for religious buildings. St. Paul's Episcopal Church, shown above in a contemporary photograph and below in a photograph from the 1930s, is one of Key West's most prominent examples of this style. Characteristics of the Gothic Revival Style for religious architecture in Key West include:

- A basilican or cruciform plan, with both shorter and longer wings creating an asymmetrical appearance.
- A prominent tower, placed at either the gable end or at the junction of two wings. A steeple and belfry are on the second story, and the tall pyramidal roof was topped by either a cross or a weather vane.
- Gothic-arched windows and doors. The windows often have stained glass with wood or lead muntins. Alternatively, simple double-hung sash windows with a triangular or arched head are employed. The main door usually has two leaves and heavy iron hinges and handles.
- Use of crenellation along the parapet walls. The roof is usually covered with slate or metal shingles in a decorative pattern.
- Gothic-inspired ornament (although usually quite fanciful and rarely based on actual Gothic examples), such as carving, scrollwork, crockets, trefoils, finials, and label molding.



Bahama (Conch) House

“Bahama houses were first brought in pieces from Green Turtle Cay, an important Bahamian settlement, and reconstructed in Key West. Houses similar to these are found in Louisiana, Mississippi, and northern Florida. Such houses were also common throughout the Caribbean Islands including Puerto Rico and Cuba. The Bahama House is well-suited to the tropical climate of Key West and was built to take advantage of the sea breezes. Early Bahama houses often had no central hallway; many were later modified to create a central passageway. Some had exterior staircases. They usually contained three rooms on each floor, which accessed the verandah by way of multiple doorways. Only a handful of classic Bahama houses remain in Key West today.”

Source: Historic Architectural Guidelines (2002), page 64.

Characteristics of the Bahama (Conch) House in Key West include:

- A rectangular or square plan, with the building standing on coral or (later) brick piers.
- A two-story height with front gable roof with prominent front eaves.
- Weatherboard cladding.
- Two-story, full-width front porch, sometimes with exterior stair to second story.
- Double-hung sash windows



Queen Anne Style

Initially, the Queen Anne Style was popularized by the English Victorian-era architect Richard Norman Shaw. Making its way to the United States via the 1876 Centennial Exposition, the Queen Anne Style quickly caught on with architects, builders, and the general public. Queen Anne-style houses in Key West (such as the so-called Artist House at 534 Eaton Street shown at right) are nearly always frame structures sided with a variety of wooden materials, principally shingles, weatherboard, and German siding. Thus, its popularity was facilitated by the manufacture of mass-produced wooden ornaments and millwork, which were shipped to local suppliers via railroad. The Queen Anne Style in Key West is almost exclusively a residential style. Characteristics of the Queen Anne Style in Key West include:

- Irregular plan and an irregular massing of building and roof forms. Roof forms include hipped, gable, pyramidal, gambrel, but usually featured a dominant, front-facing gable. Queen Anne Style houses are seldom less than two stories in height.
- Use of square, rectangular, polygonal, and round towers, often at the corners, along with polygonal and rounded window bays.
- One or more porches, usually wrap-around, with turned posts, classical columns or chamfered posts. Porches often have polygonal or rounded corners, and sometimes feature conical roofs, although the hipped roof was the most common roof shape.
- A multiplicity of window sizes and shapes, including round, oval, square, and rectangular. Double-hung sash windows and casement windows are common. On double-hung sash windows, the upper sash often had

multiple lights, sometimes in a diamond or lozenge pattern.

- An emphasis on the textural patterns of the exterior, including the use of fish-scale, saw-tooth, round, and scalloped shingles.
- Use of machine-made wooden decorative features such as finials, pendants, scrollwork, trusses, brackets, and pierced woodwork.



Classical Revival, Double Gallery House

“The Classical Revival style in Key West is derived from the Greek Revival style, which was the national architectural style of the United States from the mid 1830s until the Civil War. High-style Greek Revival architecture soon gave way to the Key West “Temple Form” variants fashioned primarily in wood, which mimicked the proportions of classical idealism. A simple building could be formed into a facsimile of a Greek Temple by extending the gable to create a portico. Squared pillars topped with ornate moldings were a substitute for formal columns. The Classical Revival Style tended to linger in the South long after it had ceased to be fashionable in the Northern states, and buildings with classical motifs continued to be built. There are over 300 temple form houses in Key West, 200 of these are two-story homes; all are constructed of wood.”

Source: Historic Architectural Guidelines (2002), page 62.

Characteristics of the Classical Revival Style (such as the house at 527 Fleming Street above and an unidentified house in a ca. 1942 photograph) in Key West include:

- A symmetrical, regular plan and exterior appearance, with the front façade rectangular or nearly square. The pristine and rational appearance of Classical Revival style architecture is accentuated by its white, painted exterior, accented by black or dark green shutters and doors.
- A gable-roofed, pedimented portico on the front elevation, with classical columns (often paired or clustered) and trimmed with dentil molding. Side porches are less common, and are usually flat-roofed, sometimes with a rooftop balustrade.

- Classically derived columns, balustrades, modillions, and dentils.
- Double-hung window sash with 12/12, 9/9, 6/6, or 4/4 sash. The Classical Revival Style rarely employs more lights on the upper sash than on the lower sash. Classical Revival Style windows usually have working louvered shutters.
- A central or off-center entrance on the gable end with a six-panel or four-panel door, often topped by a rectangular or semicircular transom and/or a pediment. Fluted pilasters and/or rectangular sidelights sometimes flank the door.



Classical Revival Style: Key West Eyebrow House

“The Eyebrow House is a style unique to Key West which features a second set of smaller windows perched above the primary first floor windows and tucked under the roofline so that they appear to be peeking out from under the eaves. They are similar in structure to the five-bay galleried houses of Louisiana, but those do not feature the usual attributes of windows hooded underneath the roofline. The Roberts family of Key West built several eyebrow houses in the 1870s and 1880s. Porches extend the full length of the façade as they do on other Key West houses and include many Classical Revival details.”
Source: Historic Architectural Guidelines (2002), page 64.



Features of the Classical Revival Style- Eyebrow House in Key West (as shown on examples located on Fleming Street above and below) include:

- Frame construction with some classical trim.
- A two-story, full-width front porch with single or clustered columns.
- A central front entrance, sometimes with double doors.
- A side gable roof.
- A regular, symmetrical disposition of door and window openings. Windows are tall and rectangular with double-hung and even triple-hung sash with 9/9, 12/12, or 16/16 lights. Second story windows are beneath the eaves, the characteristic feature of this style.



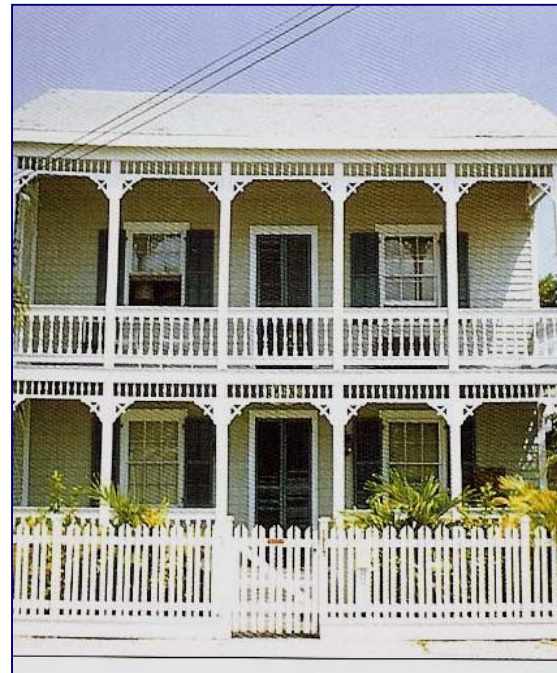
Classical Revival Style: Side Gable House

“Often also called Bahama Houses, these graceful galleried homes were once common throughout the Caribbean and the southern Gulf Coast. Today, fine examples are rare although they are also found in Pensacola and New Orleans. Their generous windows caught the breezes and directed them throughout the house as the roof scuttles were opened to dispense the hot air that rose through the roof. The simplest hints of Classical Revival detailing were used in window surrounds and columns. They were built of the best yellow pine, cypress, cedar, and mahogany.”

Source: Historic Architectural Guidelines (2002), page 66.

Features of the Classical Revival Styles in Key West, such as the house at 1017 Fleming Street at right, include:

- Frame construction with classical trim.
- A two-story, full-width front porch with single or clustered columns.
- A central front entrance, sometimes with double doors, topped by a triangular pediment, and flanked by columns or pilasters.
- A side gable roof, sometimes with a central cross gable.
- A regular, symmetrical disposition of door and window openings. Windows are tall and rectangular with double-hung and even triple-hung sash with 9/9, 12/12, or 16/16 lights. Most windows are topped by a pediment or at least some molding.
- Symmetrically placed wings, usually flanking the main body of the house or building.

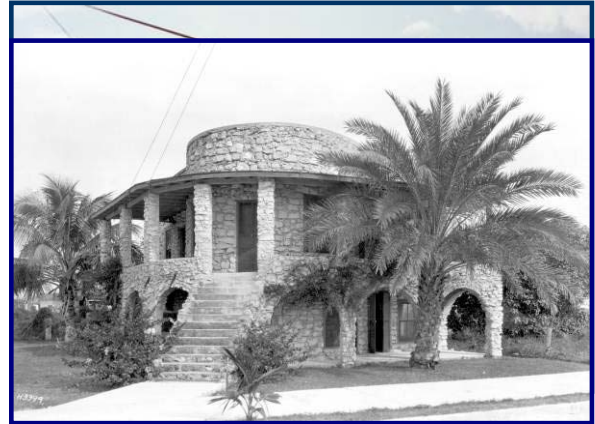


Masonry Vernacular

Masonry vernacular buildings in Key West employ brick, block or brick tile (or more rarely native coral) construction but otherwise lack ornamentation or other stylistic references. Brick, the most common masonry material in the United States, was not easily available in Florida until the turn of the 20th century in Florida because of poor transportation facilities and the indigenous soil content. Because of its fire-resistant qualities, brick was most often used for commercial and institutional buildings in Key West during the later 19th century. After 1900, new brick colors and textures were introduced, increasing its popularity for commercial buildings. Beginning in the 1920s, two new masonry materials, hollow tile and concrete block, became widely used as well. These new materials were as strong as fired brick, but were lighter and cheaper. In later years, concrete block, either smooth-faced or rusticated, virtually replaced brick as a structural material, as can be seen in most of Key West's commercial buildings from the 1930s onward. Brick became used more as a veneer in combination with masonry or frame interior walls. After World War II, concrete block and cinder block construction was widely used for residential construction.

Some early 20th century Masonry Vernacular buildings employ such decorative features as rusticated concrete block, concrete keystone lintels, and concrete columns with classical capitals. Masonry Vernacular buildings from the 1920s on are finished with stucco, brick or stone veneer or clay tile.

The early 1900s commercial building pictured above is located at the corner of Olivia and Duval Streets. The unusual coral building below is located at the corner of White and South Streets.



Characteristics of Masonry Vernacular Architecture in Key West include:

- Rectangular or square shaped, sometimes an L plan.
- Use of brick, or smooth/ rusticated concrete block (or more rarely coral). Masonry buildings are often painted, stucco is used less frequently.
- Flat or gable roof with overhanging eaves and no cornice. Hipped and pyramidal roofs are less frequent.
- Little or no surface ornament.

Frame Vernacular–Single Gallery

Frame vernacular architecture was the common wood-frame construction of self-taught builders and carpenters, often passed from one generation to another. Vernacular building traditions resulted from the builder's experience, available resources, and responses to the local climate. Vernacular architecture predominated throughout Florida until the early 20th century when improved transportation brought better building materials and more architectural sophistication along with it. Most frame vernacular buildings were residential, but some frame churches and commercial buildings were also constructed.

“With more elaborate detailing, often with a faintly classical influence or folk Victorian brackets and other decorative woodwork, these one-and-one-half story cottages had a front porch, which was usually covered with a shed or hipped roof. Their clapboarded exteriors were supported by the new balloon framing and mass-produced wire nails rather than massive pegged timber frames and cut nails. Many of these were built to replace the many homes destroyed by the hurricanes of 1846, 1909, and 1910.” *Source: Historic Architectural Guidelines (2002), page 66.*

Features of Frame Vernacular residences in Key West, (such as the house at 1103 Fleming Street shown at right), include:

- Regular, rectangular plan with front facing gable. Some square plans with pyramidal roofs or irregular plans with intersecting gable roofs are also seen in Key West.
- A one-story, hip-roofed or shed-roofed front porch resting on brick or concrete block piers and with plain or chamfered posts.
- Brick or concrete block foundations with lattice infill.
- One story or one-and-one-half-story height.

- Horizontal wood siding, including weatherboard and German siding. Shingle and board and batten siding is less common.



- Roofs surfaced with standing seam or V-crimp metal. Beginning in the 1920s, composition and asbestos shingle are used with increasing frequency. Roofs are generally less steeply sloped beginning in the 1920s.

After the early 1900s, Frame Vernacular houses became less classically inspired. Exposed rafter ends and knee braces, corner boards, louvered attic vents, and shutters are usually the only decorative elements seen.

Commercial Vernacular

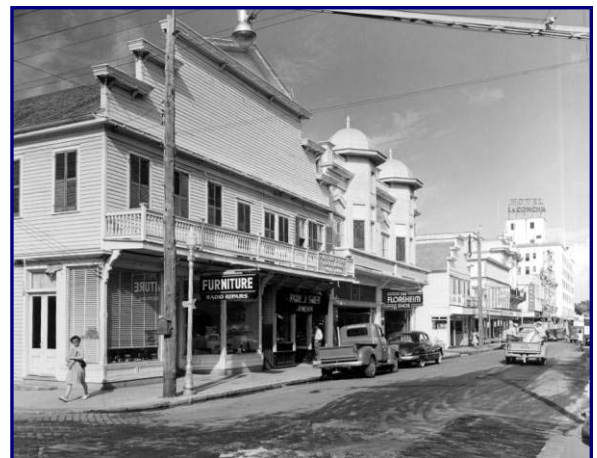
Design of commercial buildings in Key West and Florida mirrored national trends. During the mid-19th century, commercial buildings developed as a distinct property type throughout the country. Because commercial buildings were concentrated in districts with higher land values, the lot configuration exercised an important design constraint. Buildings were constructed up to the sidewalk or street and hugged the lot lines and were nearly always rectangular. The narrow elevation facing the street became the focus of the design and provided the building's identifying features. Two examples of frame commercial buildings on Duval Street (above is a contemporary photograph, and below is a ca. 1941 photo) are shown at right

Facades were organized into distinct sections or zones commonly containing either one or two parts:

The *ONE-PART COMMERCIAL BLOCK* was seen on one-story buildings and was formed by a structural framework consisting of columns, bulkheads or kick panels, and a cornice topped by a parapet. Large display windows were placed within this framework to display merchandise and light the interior. This framework formed a basic compositional arrangement. Materials, doors, and windows, and decorative and stylistic details constituted secondary characteristics that could be organized in a variety of ways.

The *TWO PART COMMERCIAL BLOCK* was a multi-story building organized into upper and lower zones. The design of the lower zone was essentially the same as the one-part façade. It contained distinct uses in each zone. The lower zone generally housed public spaces such as retail space, while the upper zones housed apartments, meeting halls, or offices. The two-part commercial

block predominates in Key West's downtown business district.



6.1 INTRODUCTION

Both the re-surveyed and newly surveyed historic resources in Key West were evaluated for their eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as well as for local landmark designation as part of the Key West Historic District. Surveyed historic resources in Key West were evaluated according to *National Register Bulletin 15-How to Apply the National Register Criteria* and *National Register Bulletin 21- Defining Boundaries for National Register Properties*. Many surveyed resources, although possibly individually significant, were more appropriately evaluated as part of the Key West Historic District.

6.2 BENEFITS OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

The National Register provides recognition for individual buildings and historic districts significant on the national, state, or local level. One important function of the National Register is to identify significant properties that federal, state, and local planners should carefully consider when developing projects. Specifically, any project involving federal or state funding, permitting, licensing, or assistance must avoid adverse impacts to the National Register-listed or -eligible property.

Listing in the National Register, either individually or as part of an historic district, may make a property eligible for a Federal Income Tax Credit. The property must be income-producing and may qualify for up to a 20% income tax credit. In Florida, counties and cities can grant *ad valorem* tax relief for owners of historic properties. National register-listed properties also may be eligible for some American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and building safety code adjustments.

6.3 HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE AND THE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA

The National Register lists individual landmarks and historic districts that satisfy specific criteria for significance and standards for architectural integrity. The significance of an individual landmark or an historic district is assessed against the historic context established for the surrounding county, region, or state. The historic context written for the 2004 Key West Historic Resources Survey established several important historical themes and time periods against which Key West's historic resources can be evaluated.

The integrity of an individual resource or a historic district carries equal weight with its historic significance in assessing eligibility for listing in the National Register. Alterations and additions to historic resources affect the integrity of individual resources. Modern infill, extensive demolitions, or alterations of street plans can affect the integrity of an historic district. When the integrity of an individual building or historic district has been so thoroughly compromised by additions or alterations, it is no longer eligible for National Register listing, no matter how historically significant it is.

6.4 APPLYING THE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA TO THE KEY WEST HISTORIC DISTRICT SURVEY AREA

The three National Register Criteria (Criterion A, B, or C) relating to historic structures were applied to historic resources in Key West surveyed and/or resurveyed as part of the 2004 architectural survey. Surveyed resources were evaluated as either contributing or non-contributing resources that fall within the three National Register Criteria for which the Key West Historic District is listed.

- Criterion A relates to the broad patterns of history on the national, state, or local level, as well as association with important historical events. For example, the former Martello Towers relate to Key West's role as a fortified town during the Civil War.
- Criterion B relates to an individual resource's association with a person or persons significant on the local, state, or national level. The Eduardo Gato House is listed in the National Register for its association with the life of Key West's leading nineteenth-century cigar manufacturer. An historic district also may contain buildings that are associated with significant individuals.
- Criterion C relates to buildings or historic districts that embody one or more distinctive architectural styles or types, or can be attributed to known architects or master craftsmen. The former US Customs House is listed under Criterion C as a superlative example of Richardsonian Romanesque architecture in Florida. The Key West Historic District is listed in the National Register under Criterion C for its collection of buildings representing a wide variety of popular nineteenth and early-twentieth century architectural styles.

6.5 SURVEYED RESOURCES RECOMMENDED AS CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES IN THE KEY WEST HISTORIC DISTRICT

The following is a table of buildings recommended as contributing resources in the locally designated Key West Historic District and/or an expanded Key West National Register Historic District.

Historic Resources Recommended as Contributing to a Proposed Expansion of the Key West National Register Historic District

MSF Number	Property Name or Address	Address
MO00202	OLD POST OFFICE AND CUSTOMS HOUSE	FRONT ST
MO00231	CLINTON SQUARE MARKET	291 FRONT ST
MO00232A	UNITED STATES MARINE HOSPITAL	401 EMMA ST
MO00296	711 CAROLINE STREET	711 CAROLINE ST
MO00496	219 ELIZABETH STREET	219 ELIZAETH ST
MO00798	101 SIMONTON STREET	101 SIMONTON ST
MO00890	730 TRUMAN AVENUE	730 TRUMAN AVE

MO00963	1111 WATSON STREET	1111 WATSON ST
MO00996	1222-1224 WHITE STREET	1222-1224 WHITE ST
MO01082	1221 WILLIAM STREET	1221 WILLIAM ST
MO01251	WEATHER BUREAU BUILDING	57 FRONT ST
MO01361	1010 WINDSOR LANE	1010 WINDSOR LN
MO01451	444 WHITEHEAD STREET	444 WHITEHEAD ST
MO01453	OUR LADY OF LOURDES & BERNADETTE GROTTO	1010 WINDSOR LN
MO01557	418 UNITED STREET	418 UNITED ST
MO01684	1227 SOUTH STREET HOUSE	1227 SOUTH ST
MO01685	MAY SANDS SCHOOL	1400 UNITED ST
MO01695	ROSASCO, MA & H HOUSE	1231 SOUTH ST
MO01699	ROSE, P & D HOUSE	1225 SOUTH ST
MO01706	BERVALDI, J F HOUSE	1215 WASHINGTON ST
MO01706	BERVALDI, JF HOUSE	1215 WASHINGTON ST
MO01707	ESQUINALDO, D & S HOUSE	1217 WASHINGTON ST
MO01708	FORD, W R HOUSE	1227 WASHINGTON ST
MO01709	PHISTER, VON INC HOUSE	1311 FLAGLER AVE
MO01710	GORMAN, L& R HOUSE	1301 FLAGLER
MO01752	ESTENOZ, J HOUSE	1208 VON PHISTER ST
MO01753	ESTENOZ, H HOUSE	1210 VON PHISTER ST
MO01754	1229 VON PHISTER STREET	1229 VON PHISTER ST
MO01759	KOENIG, JM & NM HOUSE	1101 FLAGLER AVE
MO01760	KOENIG, J & M HOUSE	1105 FLAGLER AVE
MO01761	KOENIG, J & N HOUSE	1117 FLAGLER AVE
MO01762	SANCHEZ, JOSE T HOUSE	1125 FLAGLER AVE
MO01775	MAINTENANCE DEPT MONROE CTY SCHOOL BOARD	1310 UNITED ST
MO01777	BROWNING, ML & C HOUSE	906 JOHNSON ST
MO01779	FILLER, J & C HOUSE	1100 FLAGLER AVE
MO01780	ARTMAN, N & S HOUSE	1019 FLAGLER AVE
MO01781	GRIMM, RD & J HOUSE	1028 FLAGLER AVE
MO01782	POPE, T & P HOUSE	1015 FLAGLER AVE
MO01783	TABAILLOUX, C HOUSE	924 FLAGLER AVE

SECTION SIX

Evaluation

MO01784	MILLER TR, GA HOUSE	1440 GRINNELL ST
MO01787	CRIMMONS, HM HOUSE	904 WASHINGTON ST
MO01811	816 SOUTH STREET HOUSE	816 SOUTH ST
MO01814	804 SOUTH STREET HOUSE	804 SOUTH ST
MO01815	BLAIR AND KING HOUSE	1320 ROYAL ST
MO01816	ROBINSON, N S GOUSE	1321 WILLIAM ST
MO01816	ROBINSON, NS HOUSE	1321 WILLIAM ST
MO01817	1315 ROYAL STREET HOUSE	1315 ROYAL ST
MO01943	NAVAL STORE BUILDING	200 GREENE ST
MO01944	POWER PLANT BUILDING	201 FRONT ST
MO01948	MACHINE SHOP	TRUMAN ANNEX
MO01953	SMITHERY BUILDING	103 FRONT ST
MO02697	DOELMAN, J HOUSE	616 VIRGINIA ST
MO02726	CLARK & EBERSOHN HOUSE	614 VIRGINIA ST
MO02745	ST MARY'S GIFT SHOP	1012 WINDSOR LN
MO02904	531 UNITED STREET HOUSE	531 UNITED ST
MO02905	529 UNITED STREET HOUSE	529 UNITED ST
MO02906	527 UNITED STREET HOUSE	527 UNITED ST
MO02907	525 UNITED STREET HOUSE	525 UNITED ST
MO03037	SHELBY, K G & D B HOUSE	1611 VON PHISTER ST
MO03038	ROBERTS, R H HOUSE	1603 VON PHISTER St
MO03046	TABOUR, R S HOUSE	717 CAROLINE ST
MO03130	ALLEN FOOD STORE	716/718 EMMA ST
MO03136	CUSHMAN, V HOUSE	720 EMMA ST
MO03140	323 FLEMING STREET	323 FLEMING ST
MO03141	THE NATURE CONSERVANCY BUILDING	333 FLEMING ST
MO03181	PARISH HALL, HOLY INNOCENTS EPISCOPAL CHURCH	901 FLAGLER AVE
MO03182	SAMUELS, NORMAN J & JANE B HOUSE	900 FLAGLER AVE
MO03184	WOOD, SHIRLEY P HOUSE	1021 WASHINGTON ST
MO03185	SMITH, WAYNE L HOUSE	1413 GRINNELL ST
MO03195	113 PETRONIA STREET	113 PETRONIA ST
MO03196	109 PETRONIA STREET	109 PETRONIA ST

MO03206	925 SEMINARY STREET	925 SEMINARY ST
MO03207	HARRISON, R W HOUSE	1401 REYNOLDS ST
MO03300	THALLER, J T HOUSE	114 OLIVIA ST
MO03301	112 OLIVIA STREET	112 OLIVIA ST
MO03302	110 OLIVIA STREET	110 OLIVIA ST
MO03303	GOLDSMITH, I M HOUSE	100 OLIVIA ST
MO03307	LEHMKUHL, J A HOUSE	910 EMMA ST
MO03308	WILKERSON, M J HOUSE	914 EMMA ST
MO03309	EARLY, C HOUSE	906 EMMA ST
MO03310	MORGAN & KELLY HOUSE	904 EMMA ST
MO03311	FREDERICK DOUGLASS COMMUNITY CENTER	EMMA ST
MO03617	1220 SEMINARY STREET	1220 SEMINARY ST
MO03618	1224 SEMINARY STREET	1224 SEMINARY ST
MO03619	1230 SEMINARY STREET	1230 SEMINARY ST
MO04022	1232 SOUTH STREET	1232 SOUTH ST
MO04023	1233 SOUTH STREET	1233 SOUTH ST
MO04024	1224 SOUTH STREET	1224 SOUTH ST
MO04025	1241 VON PHISTER STREET	1241 VON PHISTER ST
MO04026	1207 VON PHISTER STREET	1207 VON PHISTER ST
MO04027	1128 VON PHISTER STREET	1128 VON PHISTER ST
MO04028	1120 VON PHISTER STREET	1120 VON PHISTER ST
MO04029	1001 VON PHISTER STREET	1001 VON PHISTER ST
MO04030	1506 GRINNELL STREET	1506 GRINNELL ST
MO04031	923 JOHNSON STREET	923 JOHNSON ST
MO04032	520 LOUISA STREET	520 LOUISA ST
MO04034	707-709 CATHERINE STREET	707-709 CATHERINE ST
MO04035	711 CATHERINE STREET	711 CATHERINE ST
MO04036	806 CATHERINE STREET	806 CATHERINE ST
MO04037	1120 CATHERINE STREET	1120 CATHERINE ST
MO04038	1118 CATHERINE STREET	1118 CATHERINE ST
MO04039	1122 WATSON STREET	1122 WATSON ST
MO04040	1113 WATSON STREET	1113 WATSON ST
MO04041	1105 VIRGINIA STREET	1105 VIRGINIA ST

MO04042	1107 VIRGINIA STREET	1107 VIRGINIA ST
MO04043	308 MARGARET STREET	308 MARGARET ST
MO04044	832 CAROLINE STREET	832 CAROLINE ST
MO04045	900 CAROLINE STREET	900 CAROLINE ST
MO04046	917 DUVAL STREET	917 DUVAL ST
MO04047	711 DUVAL STREET	711 DUVAL ST
MO04048	701 DUVAL STREET	701 DUVAL ST
MO04049	PEGASUS HOTEL	533-537 DUVAL ST
MO04050	520 DUVAL STREET	520 DUVAL ST
MO04051	518 DUVAL STREET	518 DUVAL ST
MO04052	126-128 DUVAL STREET	126-128 DUVAL ST
MO04053	404 SOUTH STREET	404 SOUTH ST
MO04054	711 SOUTH STREET	711 SOUTH ST
MO04055	ALEXANDER PALMS COURT	715 SOUTH ST
MO04056	718 SOUTH STREET	718 SOUTH ST
MO04057	721 SOUTH STREET	721 SOUTH ST
MO04058	901 SOUTH STREET	901 SOUTH ST
MO04059	1016 SOUTH STREET	1016 SOUTH ST
MO04060	1111 SOUTH STREET	1111 SOUTH ST
MO04061	1120 SOUTH STREET	1120 SOUTH ST
MO04062	1304 ELIZABETH STREET	1304 ELIZABETH ST
MO04063	1309 ELIZABETH STREET	1309 ELIZABETH ST
MO04064	1315 ELIZABETH STREET	1315 ELIZABETH ST
MO04065	1319 ELIZABETH STREET	1319 ELIZABETH ST
MO04066	719 WASHINGTON STREET	719 WASHINGTON ST
MO04067	900 WASHINGTON STREET	900 WASHINGTON ST
MO04068	1017 WASHINGTON STREET	1017 WASHINGTON ST
MO04070	1235 WASHINGTON STREET	1235 WASHINGTON ST
MO04071	622 CAROLINE STREET	622 CAROLINE ST
MO04072	101 ANN STREET	101 ANN ST
MO04073	CRABBY BILL'S	511 GREENE ST
MO04074	432 GREENE STREET	432 GREENE ST
MO04075	901-903 EATON STREET	901-903 EATON ST

SECTION SIX

Evaluation

MO04076	1116 EATON STREET	1116 EATON ST
MO04077	906 FLEMING STREET	906 FLEMING ST
MO04078	VARELA MASONIC LODGE	909 FLEMING ST
MO04079	715 FLEMING STREET	715 FLEMING ST
MO04080	531 FLEMING STREET	531 FLEMING ST
MO04081	520 OLIVIA STREET	520 OLIVIA ST
MO04082	517 WHITEHEAD STREET	517 WHITEHEAD ST
MO04083	600-602 WHITEHEAD STREET	600-602 WHITEHEAD ST
MO04084	UNION MASONIC LODGE	328 TRUMAN AVE
MO04085	BLUE MARLIN MOTEL	1320 SIMONTON ST
MO04086	611 SIMONTON STREET	611 SIMONTON ST
MO04087	613 SIMONTON STREET	613 SIMONTON ST
MO04088	SPINDRFT MOTEL	1212 SIMONTON ST
MO04089	1202 SIMONTON STREET	1202 SIMONTON ST
MO04090	DELI RESTAURANT	926 SIMONTON ST
MO04091	1119-1123 SIMONTON STREET	1119-1123 SIMONTON ST
MO04092	817 SIMONTON STREET	817 SIMONTON ST
MO04093	802 SIMONTON STREET	802 SIMONTON ST
MO04094	800 SIMONTON STREET	800 SIMONTON ST
MO04095	720 SIMONTON STREET	720 SIMONTON ST
MO04096	828 SIMONTON STREET	828 SIMONTON ST
MO04097	813 SIMONTON STREET	813 SIMONTON ST
MO04098	SOUTHWINDS MOTEL	1321 SIMONTON ST
MO04099	SCOTTISH RITE TEMPLE	330 SIMONTON ST
MO04100	1215 DUVAL STREET	1215 DUVAL ST
MO04101	1200 DUVAL STREET	1200 DUVAL ST
MO04102	1128-1130 DUVAL STREET	1128-1130 DUVAL ST
MO04103	1114 DUVAL STREET	1114 DUVAL ST
MO04104	1022-1024 DUVAL STREET	1022-1024 DUVAL ST
MO04105	918-920 DUVAL STREET	918-920 DUVAL ST

7.1 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Between February and June 2004, URS Corp (URS) of Gaithersburg MD conducted a survey and survey update of pre-1954 historic architectural resources for the City of Key West, Monroe County, Florida. The Key West Historic Resources Survey was conducted for the City of Key West Building Department, recipient of a grant-in-aid from the Division of Historical Resources-Department of State. The survey was conducted within the boundaries of the National Register-listed and locally designated Key West Historic District, comprising an approximately 540-acre section of the City of Key West, county seat of Monroe County. The project purpose was to update information on previously surveyed resources in the historic district; to survey historic resources in the historic district not previously identified; and to provide recommendations for further preservation activity in Key West, including the development of revised boundaries for the Key West National Register Historic District.

The Key West Historic Resources Survey included a search of the Florida Master Site File (MSF) for information on previously recorded historic resources in the Key West Historic District; research on the history and architecture of the City of Key West; and the development of an historic context for Key West up to 1954. Fieldwork included updating information on 2,375 previously surveyed resources and the survey of 83 additional pre-1954 historic resources within the boundaries of the locally designated Key West Historic District. The previously surveyed architectural resources were re-evaluated for their status as contributing resources in the Key West Historic District. The newly surveyed architectural resources were evaluated for their status as contributing resources in the currently defined Key West National Register Historic District, or as part of a proposed expanded Key West National Register Historic District. Information on the updated and newly surveyed resources was entered into the *SmartForm* data base program required by the Division of Historical Resources. Survey products to the Division of Historical Resources and the City of Key West included printed *SmartForms* for the surveyed resources, black-and-white and digital photographs, and location maps for all surveyed resources, as well as this Final Report.

7.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- Currently, the Key West National Register Historic District is smaller than the locally designated Key West Historic District. URS surveyed 100 resources located outside the National Register district boundaries, but within the boundaries of the local historic district. The boundaries of the National Register district should be enlarged to include these surveyed resources as contributing resources (Figure 3).
- The City of Key West should integrate the FMSF forms and digital photographs of the Key West Historic District Survey with the files of previously surveyed historic resources at the Key West Building Department where they should be made available for review and copying by the general public.
- Based on 1962 Sanborn maps in the possession of the City of Key West and tax assessor's records, the City of Key West should identify areas outside of the locally designated Key West Historic District boundaries containing concentrations of pre-1954 resources eligible for survey and designation as part of a new and/or expanded local historic district in Key West.
- The City of Key West should seek funding for a comprehensive professional update of historic architectural resources in Key West every 5 years. Future surveys would reflect

SECTION SEVEN

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendation

changes to the appearance of contributing resources in the district and allow for the addition of buildings to the district that previously did not meet the 50-year criteria for inclusion.

- The City of Key West should seek funding to place architectural survey information, including digital photographs, on-line for use by the general public.
- The City of Key West Building Department staff should receive training on using the *SmartForm* program and be able to enter and/or change survey data for architectural resources in Key West.

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